

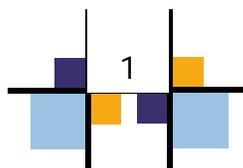
# VICTIM RIGHTS & VICTIM ADVOCACY

The United States Attorney continues to focus on federal crime victims' rights and to promote these rights within the tribal, state and federal agencies that refer cases to this office for prosecution. This year, we have made more changes to improve our victim services. We hired *Jennifer Westenhaver* to provide victim advocacy and administrative support in our Flagstaff Office. Previously, Phoenix Victim Advocates traveled weekly to Flagstaff to provide this service. Additionally, we promoted *Mary-Anne Estrada*, formerly a Victim Witness Assistant, to an Advocate to enable the Tucson Staff to increase the victim services and personal attention to all federal crime victims. The U.S. Attorney will continue to focus heavily on federal crime victims' services in the coming years.

**U.S. Attorney's Office Receives National Recognition:** During National Crime Victims' Rights Week, the U.S. Department of Justice, Office for Victims of Crime, recognizes the work of programs that exemplify excellence in service to crime victims. This year the U.S. Attorney's Office *Financial Litigation Unit* ["*FLU*"] and the *Victim Witness Program* were chosen from among hundreds of nominees from across the country to receive national recognition. These awards reflect the office's commitment to improve service to federal crime victims in Arizona.

- The FLU Unit received the **Crime Victims' Fund Award**. Among the reasons cited for this award was the collection of over \$3.5 Million in fines and restitution for crime victims in fiscal year 2002.
- The Victim Witness Program received the **Federal Service Award** in recognition of the unique challenges and responsibilities involved in serving Arizona's expansive geographic area. The large geographic area served by the eight person Victim Witness staff and two part-time student aides requires traveling long distances to provide personal attention to victims who would otherwise go unserved. In addition to handling a daily caseload, staff are responsible for public education, awareness and technical assistance on victim's issues including domestic violence and child protection, particularly in Indian Country. In 2002, the Staff handled approximately 500 cases with 2,613 victims and provided 3,104 notifications.

**Arizona Community and National Activity:** Throughout the year, the Victim Witness Staff participate in year-round state and national crime prevention and awareness activities. During the **2003 National Crime Victim's Rights Week**, staff promoted public awareness of victim's rights laws and programs at the Sandra Day O'Connor U.S. Courthouse in Phoenix. The United States Attorney's Office participated in the **2003 National Crime Victims' Rights Week**, (April 21 - 27) by host-

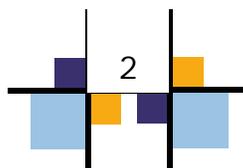




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ing an annual office ceremony. This year, memorial plaques honoring the lives of individuals slain by acts of violence were unveiled and presented to surviving family members in a special ceremony. In addition, we recognized the following individuals from Arizona who went above and beyond the call of duty in serving crime victims:

- ***Dori Arter, Victim Advocate, U.S. Attorney’s Office (Tucson).*** Ms. Arter was nominated by the Tohono O’odham Nation for her ten years of service to crime victims in Southern Arizona: “Dori has had a very positive working relationship with the Tohono O’odham Nation and has gained their trust and respect. No matter how stressful the situation she is always a calming presence both to the victims and those she works with. She deals with victims with strength, grace and humility and perhaps most importantly, a sense of humor. She is the U S Attorney’s Office’s ‘face’ to victims and is to be commended for her dedicated service.”
- ***James M. Bashore, Tohono O’odham Nation Police Officer.*** Officer Bashore has been a State Certified Police Officer for less than two years, but he continues to go above and beyond the call of duty in assisting crime victims. In November 2002, a 14 year old female was abandoned by her parents and left to live in the streets. In consultation with CPS, Officer Bashore found a temporary shelter for her, enrolled her in high school and arranged with the school to provide her with school supplies. Subsequently, he found her relatives in the northeastern part of the United States and reunited her with other family members. In February 2003, six family members on their way to church were involved in a head-on vehicle collision and were seriously injured. They were taken to two different hospitals. In the days following the accident, Officer Bashore personally made sure the family was all right and facilitated communication between the injured. He connected them with their insurance company and the pastor of their church. His quick actions enabled a smooth recovery for the family and ensured that resources were available to them without delay.
- ***Ronald D. Bellavia, BORSTAR Commander, U.S. Border Patrol.*** Agent Bellavia leads the Tucson Sector BP Search, Trauma and Rescue (BORSTAR) Unit. He was recognized for his outstanding leadership and the performance of his Unit. From February 2002 to February 2003, his Unit rescued 338 people from the desert areas surrounding Tucson saving many of these individuals from possible excruciating death. The unit also recovered 58 bodies of people who had succumbed to the severe weather conditions. They also performed medical services for 177 rescued individuals who were found in need of treatment. Many of these individuals, had been abandoned in the desert by alien smugglers without food or water. The Unit often works 16-20 hours days in searching vast areas of land to facilitate these rescue operations which are often performed in extremely hot and cold temperatures, putting agents at risk.





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- **Christine L. Jones, U.S. Border Patrol.** On September 11, 2002 Agent Jones interrupted a kidnapping in progress near Sonoita, Arizona. Undocumented immigrants assaulted and took hostage an elderly couple at their home. The kidnapers restrained the couple with duct tape and forced them into a vehicle. Agent Jones noticed something unusual about occupants of the vehicle, so she pulled the vehicle over. The 73 year-old kidnapped victim jumped out of the vehicle yelling for help. Agent Jones immediately called for back up as she apprehended one of the kidnapers. Ultimately the others were also arrested. Agent Jones actions saved two lives and removed several kidnapers from Southern Arizona.
- **Thomas C. Morris, U.S. Border Patrol.** Agent Morris interrupted a kidnapping in progress in the City of Tucson. The kidnapper was transporting the victim to an area where he would be executed. At his first opportunity, the victim jumped from the vehicle and ran to Agent Morris who was on his way to his assigned patrol area. Agent Morris made a quick assessment of the situation and pursued the armed kidnapers. He and several officers of the Tucson Police Department arrested the kidnapers.
- **Soo C. Song, Assistant U.S. Attorney, U.S. Attorney's Office (Phoenix).** Soo Song is a prosecutor assigned to the Violent Crime and Anti-Terrorism Unit. She consistently makes an effort to consider the needs of crime victims and to keep them informed on the case status. Whether she is working with a victim of child sexual abuse, the family of a violent murder victim, or the victims of illegal immigrant smuggling, she consistently puts the victims and families first. She has taken the extra time needed to explain to families why she may have to offer a plea agreement in a tough case where the evidence may be weak. She encourages the victims and families to ask questions and does not mind being asked tough questions.
- **Cynthia D. Thomae, M.S., Director Northwest Fire District Interagency CISM Team.** Ms. Thomae directs a large team of mostly volunteer persons who respond to some of the most horrific tragedies that occur in southern Arizona. The goal of her program is to mitigate traumatic stress and relieve human suffering. There are many instances in which Ms. Thomae and her team have responded. The most recent incidents in which her team responded include: the U.S. Marine MV22 Osprey crash in Marana, Arizona on April 8, 2000; the University of Arizona Medical Center College of Nursing shootings in Tucson, Arizona on October 28, 2002; and the Sahuarita High School motor vehicle accident resulting in four student fatalities on February 20, 2003.

Each of these individuals exemplify public service at its best.

